

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE *Radio Service* OFFICE OF
INFORMATION

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

Wednesday, July 6, 1938

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "MORE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS." Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the Bureau of Biological Survey and the Office of Experiment Stations, United States Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

In catching up on the week's letters today, your Aunt Sammy finds a miscellaneous assortment of questions -- questions about everything from maple sirup to fur farms and then some.

First question comes from a listener who wants to know about the maple sirup produced this past spring.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics reports that sap was running more freely this season than last in the maple sugar bush. Reports from the 10 principal maple-sugar States show that farmers tapped 5000 fewer trees this past spring but made 37 thousand pounds more sugar and 269 thousand gallons more sirup than in 1937. The increase in sirup production was 10 percent. More than 11 million 500 thousand trees were tapped.

Second question. A listener asks what food takes up the most space in cold storage warehouses.

Answer: Apples use more space in public warehouses than any other commodity. Eggs rank second in the amount of space consumed.

By the way, refrigerated storage capacity in these warehouses has increased more than a third during the past 16 years. If you are interested in figures, here are a few about these public cold places. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics had reports for 1937 from some 1,374 cold-storage warehouses and meat-packing establishments. From these reports it appears that last year there were some 730 million 322 thousand cubic feet of cold space available. The storage warehouses report that during the past few years they have stored many more quick-frozen fruits and vegetables.

One listener this week asks where to get information on growing quince trees and I am glad to announce a new Department of Agriculture leaflet on the subject. The new leaflet is called "Quince Growing." It is Leaflet No. 158. And you can have a copy by writing direct to the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C., and asking for it. As long as the free supply lasts, there is no charge for this publication.

Speaking of quinces, of course, reminds me of quince jelly -- and all the listeners who have been writing for jelly and jam and preserve recipes. So before I forget, I'll mention another new publication also from the Department of Agriculture. This is Farmers' Bulletin No. 1800, called "Homemade Jellies,



Jams and Preserves." Once more -- "Homemade Jellies, Jams and Preserves," Bulletin No. 1800. (That's a bulletin I can't even mention without getting hungry. I've tasted jellies and preserves -- made by these recipes and I can testify to their flavor.) This jelly-and-jam publication is free to all listeners who write to the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C., before the supply gives out.

A listener interested in raising foxes asks how much she would have to invest in a fur farm to make it profitable and how many such farms are already operating successfully.

The Biological Survey can't answer that question -- yet. The biologists tell me that nobody knows how many fur farms there are in the United States; or how many animals are on the farms; what the investment is; the number of people employed; or the value of the fur farm crop.

But the biologists know that fur farmers need such information. So they are trying to collect it in a first inventory of fur farming in the United States. They are sending questionnaires to all the fur farmers they have on the list asking for the facts about each farm. WPA workers will tabulate this information and put it in usable form.

But some fur farmers may be missed in this survey. So anyone in the business who does not receive a questionnaire is requested to send his name to the Biological Survey, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Although fur animals in the wild are one of the Nation's great resources, it is a depleted resource. Most of the furs used in the United States now come from other countries. This, say the biologists, is one of the reasons for the importance of the fur farm industry.

Last question. "Is it true that keeping fresh vegetables cold saves vitamins as well as flavor?"

Answer: It is quite true. Many of the common garden vegetables are naturally excellent sources of vitamins A and C both, but much of this vitamin content is lost if the vegetables stand in a warm place after coming in from the garden. (The less the vegetable is exposed to air, the better for vitamin-saving, too, so keep peas or lima beans in their shells until just before cooking and to shred cabbage or peel or prepare other vegetables the last minute.)

Cold also conserves the sugar in vegetables and sugar gives their fine sweet flavor. When freshly gathered and just mature enough, sweet corn, peas, lima and snap beans contain a good deal of sugar as well as vitamins. If these vegetables are left in a warm place after they are picked, the sugar rapidly changes to starch. The canning and freezing industries and commercial shippers of fresh vegetables now make every effort to cool vegetables right after harvesting. Sometimes they plunge them in ice-water to take out the "field heat" and then keep them in a cold room; sometimes they pack them in ice before shipping. The housewife may well take a tip from these industries and use her refrigerator to slow up spoilage and enzyme action as well as to save vitamins, flavor and crispness.

